

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 IO-13 MCT-01 EB-08 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/101 W

-----072044 120400Z /14

R 111532Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5680
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 3626

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OAS, SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: LIKELY ARGENTINE POSITION AT OASGA

REF: A. STATE 103851, B. STATE 100952

SUMMARY: ARGENTINA IS LIKELY TO AVOID CONFRONTATION
OVER HUMAN RIGHTS IN THIS YEAR'S OASGA ALTHOUGH, IF
PRESSED, IT WOULD PROBABLY SUPPORT ITS SOUTHERN CONE
NEIGHBORS AGAINST CHARGES MADE BY OTHER NATION STATES.
GOA IS WILLING TO TRADE VOTES OVER MEMBERSHIP TO OAS
INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR WOMEN. END SUMMARY.

1. TALKS WITH ARGENTINE OFFICIALS INDICATE THAT GOA
NEITHER EXPECTS (NOR WANTS) HUMAN RIGHTS TO PLAY A
PREPONDERANT AND/OR DIVISIVE ROLE IN THIS YEAR'S
OASGA. FORNMINISTRY OAS AFFAIRS CHIEF ADEN GAVE
SEVERAL REASONS: (1) AS THE MEETING OF THE IAHR
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IS SCHEDULED FOR LATE MAY, THE OASGA WILL HARDLY
HAVE TIME TO RECEIVE OR TO CONSIDER IAHR FINDINGS
AT ITS JUNE SESSION; (2) COUNTRIES HAVE SHOWN
THEMSELVES WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH THE IAHR
AND SEVERAL ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF WORKING
OUT DIRECTLY WITH IAHR THE CONDITIONS FOR AN
IAHR VISIT; (3) THE ATMOSPHERE OVER HUMAN RIGHTS

HAS MELLOWED SOMEWHAT AND COUNTRIES WILL NOT WANT TO REPEAT THE ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE OF LAST YEAR IN GRENADA.

2. THE ARGENTINE DELEGATION HAS NOT PREPARED ANY PROPOSALS TO PUT FORTH FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE UPCOMING OASGA, ON HUMAN RIGHTS OR ANY OTHER SUBJECT. IT DOES NOT INTEND TO RESUBMIT ITS PROPOSAL TO RECOGNIZE TERRORISM AS A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH FAILED TO OBTAIN A MAJORITY LAST YEAR.

3. ADEN EXPECTS THE OASGA THIS YEAR TO TURN ITS ATTENTION TO A NUMBER OF PENDING ISSUES, INCLUDING A PROPOSAL FOR A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES WHICH WAS POSTPONED LAST YEAR. (ARGENTINA IS OPPOSED TO SUCH AN OAS-INITIATED CODE, WHICH GOA BELIEVES IS AN APPROPRIATE ISSUE ONLY IN A LARGER WORLD BODY THAN THE REGIONAL OAS.) HE SUGGESTED THAT ECONOMIC ISSUES WILL DOMINATE THE MEETING, PARTICULARLY WITH THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN NORTH-SOUTH DISCUSSION ELSEWHERE.

4. ON THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN, (REF B), ADEN SAID ARGENTINA IS WILLING TO TRADE VOTES. IT WILL VOTE FOR THE US CANDIDATE IF THE US VOTES TO
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GRANT ARGENTINA A SEAT ON THE DIRECTIVE COUNCIL OF THE COMMISSION. A NOTE PROPOSING THE TRADE WILL BE FORTHCOMING.

5. COMMENT: ARGENTINA HAS SHOWN A "TURN-THE-OTHER CHEEK" ATTITUDE TO MOST CHARGES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF LATE AND CONTINUES TO TRY TO ABSORB CRITICISM WHILE WRAPPING UP ITS INTERNAL GOAL OF ERADICATING TERRORISM. THIS ATTITUDE PLUS ADEN'S COMMENTS SUGGEST THAT ARGENTINA WILL TRY TO MUTE CONFRONTATION OVER HUMAN RIGHTS AND TO AVOID LAYING ITSELF OPEN FOR ANOTHER PAINFUL ROUND OF NAME-CALLING AT THE OASGA.

6. REPORTS ARE CIRCULATING, HOWEVER, THAT AS GOA HAS SO FAR FAILED TO RESPOND TO THE IAHRC'S REQUEST FOR A VISIT, THE SUBJECT MAY COME UP AT THE OASGA. IN SUCH A CASE, ADEN'S OBSERVATION THAT IAHRC INSPECTIONS ARE BECOMING A MATTER OF BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES SUGGESTS THAT ARGENTINA WOULD PARRY FOR TIME--PERHAPS BY AGREEING TO "CONSIDER" NEGOTIATING CONDITIONS FOR

AN IAHRC VISIT--IN AN ATTEMPT TO SEPARATE IAHRC
MATTERS FROM THE MORE VISIBLE AND PUBLIC OASGA.
(NOTE: WELL-PLACED NAVY SOURCES HAVE INDICATED TO
THE EMBASSY THAT THE NAVY HAS RECOMMENDED THE
FOREIGN MINISTRY "INVITE" THE IAHRC TO VISIT ARGENTINA.
DESPITE THE FACT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS NAVY-RUN, WE
HAVE RECEIVED NO OTHER INDICATION FROM MINISTRY
OFFICIALS THAT A DECISION-WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE
MADE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT--IS IMMINENT.)
ARGENTINA MAY BE COUNTING ON THE POSSIBLE INSTALLATION
OF A BRAZILIAN TO HEAD THE IAHRC TO LESSEN THE TENSION
BETWEEN THAT ORGANIZATION AND SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES.

7. IF PRESSED ON BEHALF OF ITS NEIGHBORS, ARGENTINA
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CAN BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT THEM TO FEND OFF ANY DIRECT
ATTACK BY A MEMBER NATION. IN SUCH A CASE, ARGENTINA
CAN BE EXPECTED TO FALL BACK INTO ITS CUSTOMARY
DEFENSIVENESS, ARGUING THE WORLD'S LACK OF UNDERSTANDING
AND THE INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST THREAT AND CONSPIRACY
AGAINST ARGENTINA'S IMAGE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, HUMAN RIGHTS, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUENOS03626
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780201-0675
Format: TEL
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780570/aaaachtu.tel
Line Count: 143
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d7308ea0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 103851, 78 STATE 100952
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2727206
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LIKELY ARGENTINE POSITION AT OASGA
TAGS: SHUM, PORG, AR, OAS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d7308ea0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014